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REMARKS

UPON

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MR. CARTER'S

OUTLINE OF AN INSTITUTION

FOR THE

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EDUCATION OF TEACHERS.

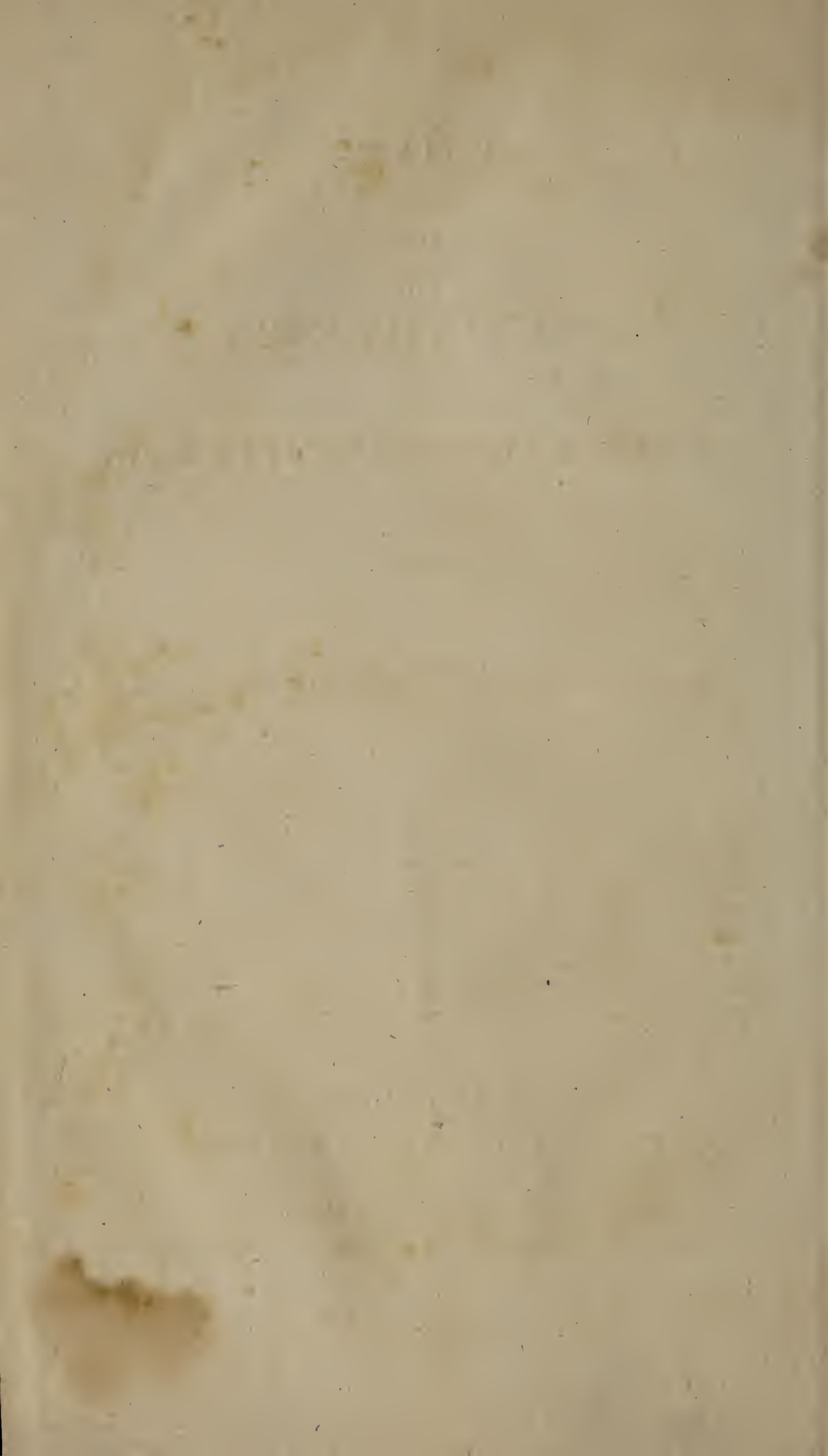
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REMARKS

UPON

MR. CARTER'S OUTLINE.

MR. CARTER shows uncommon interest in the important subject of these essays ; he has long devoted himself to it, and made it the object of deep study and extensive research. His " Letters to the Hon. William Prescott," published two or three years since, on the free schools of New England, show him to be, not only well acquainted with their origin, their history, the important bearings they may have upon our national character, the defects, or rather the injurious plans of instruction, which every where prevail in them, but also that he has carefully investigated the science of education generally, and knows well the principles by which it must be directed, in order to act beneficially and with effect. Nor is Mr. Carter a visionary, inexperienced theorist, engaged merely in ingenious speculations on this subject. We understand, that he is well acquainted with it practically, that he has taught in our academies, examined many of the free schools of our country towns, and that he has been much employed as private instructor to young gentlemen of distinguished and wealthy families ; so that he gathers his knowledge from facts, and has had every opportunity of trying the accuracy of his principles by actual observation and experiment. For all these reasons, his opinions are certainly entitled to great respect and attention.

It is astonishing how little public inquiry has been hitherto devoted in our own country, to the means of extending popular

education. Abroad, in Great Britain particularly, it has long excited every where the most intense interest. Their public prints have been full of it; parliament comes not often together without having some bill to settle, or report to hear, relating to it. It has formed, we may say, without exception perhaps, the most frequent article of discussion in the highest of their literary journals. Separate independent pamphlets, on inquiries connected with it, are continually issuing from the press; and in this truly useful employment, of aiding in the general diffusion of knowledge all over the community, bringing it home to the minds of the poor and humble, encouraging every improvement in the art of popular instruction, their greatest statesmen, as well as their finest and most intelligent writers, are warmly engaged, devoting to it much of their inestimable time, and all their splendid acquisitions. How different is it here! We believe that Congress has never been called upon to act, in any way, on the subject. Our politicians have been busy about every thing else. Our scholars and men of letters are engaged in other departments, which, though more showy and alluring, are, we venture to say, of infinitely less importance. Able inquiries into it are seldom any where seen among us; and such a pamphlet, as the one now under our consideration, is a rare phenomenon indeed.

This is the reason, probably, why the public in general do not see clearly, or are not sufficiently alive to the great national importance of popular instruction. We are not kept sufficiently on the alert to observe what is depending upon it. We all know how much education has to do in forming the character of an individual. We are seldom apt to think, that the whole community receive their impressions, and are made good or bad, virtuous or vicious, intelligent, enterprising, and peaceful, or inefficient, weak, and factious, in precisely the same way. Mr. Carter estimates, that nineteen twentieths of our population are obliged to get all their instruction from our country free schools. How important an influence, then, must they have in the formation of our national character, and how necessary is it for our legislature to take them under its close protection; supply their defects; look well to their judicious and efficient management; raise their standing in public estimation, and qualify them better for the high rank which their extensive influence ought to give them.

In our frame of government, we are trying a grand political experiment, which, in the hands of other mighty and opulent nations, has totally failed. It has not only failed, but led on to a

state of disorder more terrific and appalling, than any despotism that can be imagined. On what, then, rest our hopes of safety? How are we to be exempt from the common fate of republics? What is to rescue or save us from popular outrage, corruption, anarchy, faction, and misrule, which hurry a people on to ruin more surely and with more inevitable speed, than any regularly established tyranny, however arbitrary it may be, or even if it be of a severe military character? We answer, it is to be done only by the universal diffusion of intelligence. Let government place this within the reach, and, as far as possible, force it upon the attention of every class of youth in the community. We speak not now of the general happiness which it is almost sure to carry with it; but it is the only thing which can prepare men for the enjoyment of liberty, and secure to them the possession of it. An ignorant people can never govern themselves. It requires no small share of intelligence to know what true political liberty is, how far it may be extended, and where it must stop. An ignorant people can never be a free people. It has been every where found, that, when unrestrained by absolute authority, they naturally press on to licentiousness, a state more degrading than servitude, until, weary of the fruitless exercise of their own destructive powers, they are glad to lay them down at the feet of some favorite usurper, who has won them by the easy arts of popular intrigue; and the yoke, which such a people tend voluntarily to assume, is incomparably more oppressive and galling than any which mere despotic sovereignty could possibly impose upon them.

Much has been written about the checks and balances in our frame of government working miracles in its support, and securing us forever against its decline. But how is this? We now believe the only good effect of them is to retard the progress of legislation, so as to let light and intelligence come in. Surely there can be no conflicting interests necessarily interwoven in these several branches of authority. They are all agents for, and representatives of the great mass of the community who choose them. The senate of Massachusetts, it is true, is said to be founded on wealth, in order to protect it from violence and unjust appropriation; yet who does not perceive this to be in a great measure nominal? It ought not to have, and we hope it may never have a constant influence in regulating the measures of legislation, or in giving a tone to the laws. If there be any such influence springing from it, we believe it to be often directly the opposite of what was originally intended. The senate may become at some day the representative of the laboring classes purely; for wherever riches are accumulating, the

population of the poorer classes is increasing and crowding together in still greater proportion, and the wealthy, who are not the only voters, may be far out-numbered. So that, when competition for superiority shall actually arise between these rival classes, we may depend upon it, that the commons, who can very easily rally to act in concert in such places, will send their own tribunes to the capitol to represent them; and we have some slight experience to show us, how possible and indeed practicable all this is. We have not much to hope, then, from our checks and balances alone. It is an intelligent and enlightened community, knowing their own rights and respecting the rights of others, which must make those effectual, and to which we are to look for the protection and durability of our political institutions.

It was not our intention to go into an argument in favor of free schools as the instruments of popular education, because we believe their importance is generally every where acknowledged, although they have ceased to awaken that lively interest which they most truly deserve, and which is indispensably necessary in order to make them as extensively useful as they may and ought to be. But there is one point touched upon by Mr. Carter, which we must bring fully before our readers, for it cannot be too often repeated; and that is, the exact coincidence of these institutions with all our purest and best republican feelings. Nothing can more entirely harmonize with them. Those feelings may, and ought to be implanted early in the mind of childhood. They will then be fixed at a time, when impressions are the most deep and durable. If our free schools were raised in public estimation, as we shall soon see may be done very easily and with little additional expense, the children of the affluent, of those in easy circumstances, and of the poor and humble, will be brought together, and taught to associate, and mingle intimately with each other on the most perfect level of equality, where merit alone forms the title to rank. This will be sure to make them true to their political institutions. We are all republicans by nature; our education from infancy may be made to keep us so. Principles thus early imbibed are not speedily to be unsettled. Our national condition may change, our form of government may change, our political character may also in some respects change, but we shall be a republic still, essentially and for ever. With all their defects, the schools of which we speak, have in fact drawn forth talents from the humblest stations, and given them the first impulse, which ultimately carried them to the highest and most elevated. They tend to make the proud and wealthy willing that

the people should rule, and convince the people, that the proud and wealthy can in no way necessarily have any permanent advantage over them. If there were among us a haughty hereditary aristocracy, who wished to keep their families distinct, and prevent native genius of humble origin from mingling with, or rising superior to them, their first blow must be aimed at the free schools of our country. But we ought to cite the few remarks which Mr. Carter has made upon this interesting topic.

“If our ancestors were stern republicans, this institution did more than any and all others, to make them so, and to keep them so. While the best schools in the land are *free*, all the classes of society are blended. The rich and the poor meet and are educated together. And if educated together, nature is so even-handed in the distribution of her favors, that no fear need be entertained, that a monopoly of talent, of industry, and consequently of acquirements, will follow a monopoly of property. The principle, upon which our free schools are established, is, in itself, a stern leveller of factitious distinctions. Every generation, while the system is executed according to the true spirit of it, as conceived by our ancestors, will bring its quota of *new men* to fill the public places of distinction,—men who owe nothing to the fortunes or the crimes of their fathers, but all, under the blessing of God, to their own industry and the common schools. I say the *principle* in itself, because it has never been carried into full operation, and probably never will be.

“Its tendency, however, is not to level by debasing the exalted; but by exalting the debased. And it is a more effectual check against an aristocracy of wealth, and consequently of political influence, than would be a national jubilee and the equal distribution of property once in fifty years, without such a principle at the foundation of our system of public instruction. ‘Knowledge is power,’ says Lord Bacon; and so is property power, because it will procure knowledge. If we suppose society divided into two classes, the rich and the poor, the property of the former class, if there were no such institution as the free schools, would procure such immense advantages of education, as to bring second, third, and any rate talents, into successful competition with those of the first order, without such advantages.

“This use of property puts upon it its highest value. And it would not be politic, if it were possible, to destroy it. But it should seem, that this use ought to be limited; and that some of our institutions, at least, ought to have the tendency to put all upon the footing, on which nature and the God of nature left them. And just in proportion as you lose sight of, or abandon the true principle of the free schools, you lose sight of, and abandon all the moral,

political, and religious blessings which result from them. You check the diffusion of knowledge through all classes of people. You stop the circulation through the extremities of the body politic of the very life-blood, which must nourish and sustain them. You may preserve and amuse yourselves with the name of free institutions, and of a republican government, but you will not be blessed with the reality. You may incorporate in your constitution, if you like, the articles, 'that all men are born free and equal,' and 'that all are eligible to the highest offices;' but this is not freedom, while ninety-nine hundredths of the community have not the means of fitting themselves or their children, for discharging the duties of those high offices. As well might you tie the legs, and pinion the arms of a man, and tell him he has as fair a chance to win the race, as one who is free and trained to the course. Something like this our ancestors must have felt, who established the free schools; and something like this their posterity must feel, if they would cherish and preserve them." pp. 20—21.

Confining our remarks to the State, whose schools are the subject of Mr. Carter's examination, we observe, that the house of representatives supposes itself, whether truly or not, peculiarly to represent the people. It holds the public purse, and has the ordering and the appropriation of assessments all over the State. Is it not strange, then, that it should enable so small a portion of them to go to the support of those schools on which so much of its character depends? This is a tax, too, mainly upon the rich, and almost entirely for the assistance of the poor, for the rich send their children elsewhere. It is a tax, however, which they ought, and which they are generally willing to pay, because, like every other judicious tax, it strengthens good government, and thus secures to them the enjoyment of their property, which otherwise might be in danger of violation or encroachment. How is it, then, that almost all the late measures of the legislature have tended to lighten this useful and indeed indispensable tax? While the demand for knowledge, like the demand for every thing else, increases rapidly as society advances in opulence and improvement,—the proportional number of teachers for the common schools has been made less, and their requisite qualifications strangely diminished. They were far greater and more, under the colony laws, than they are now. The knowledge of Latin and Greek, which were then requisites, and are now dispensed with, are not, it is true, of much consequence alone; but the possessor of these will be likely to have other more valuable attainments, and a mind, in some measure, properly disciplined for the purpose of instruction. At the present time, nothing is

necessary for the common-school teacher, but some slight recommendations, which almost any one of common sense may obtain, and, of those who do obtain them, the cheapest, and therefore the most incompetent and the worst, is surest of success. How much has this sunk, and is still sinking the character of our free popular education? It has had the doubly bad effect of leading the weak, the ignorant, and the presumptuous to offer themselves as candidates for this truly responsible and important station; and of withdrawing those who are really able and meritorious instructors from situations, where their services must be so miserably paid. The monies appropriated to it are every year less and less, the qualifications of the teachers thus continually diminishing; and yet the committees, whom the towns appoint, although disposed to employ better ones, are under the sad necessity of accepting such as offer themselves, however meanly they may think of their scholarship or their manners, simply because for the poor compensation, which they are allowed to make, they can get no others. Where will the legislature order this to stop?

All the consequences which might have been fairly anticipated from this state of things, are now beginning to be fully seen and felt. The country schools are every where degraded. They stand low even in the estimation of their warmest friends. It is thought a mean thing for a man of competent estate, or for any but the mechanic, the artisan, or the laborer, to send their children to them for their education. The pupils participate in this degradation. It must and will affect their characters; for these are colored by the characters of those around them. Thus, independently of the poor instruction which they now get, they suffer a disadvantage, because their best associates, those who might do much to elevate their views and refine their manners, are taken away from them, as if they were an inferior order of beings. Thus it is, that feelings and sentiments, not in perfect harmony with our peculiar political principles, may be early taught and deeply settled. Strong lines of demarkation are drawn between classes of naturally equal rank and merit. The pure republican nature of the free schools is, in short, wholly destroyed. Nor does the evil rest here. The rich, the enlightened, the influential, all indeed, who are of any weight and power in our country, have withdrawn the interest they had in them, and transferred it elsewhere. The seminaries, which require private pay, and which, therefore, exclude necessarily nineteen twentieths of the community, absorb all this interest. Innumerable academies have thus sprung up

in different parts; new private schools are continually called for; and the evils, which Mr. Carter has very happily described in the following passage, are now felt and seen all over the State of Massachusetts.

“ Take any ten contiguous towns in the interior of this commonwealth, and suppose an academy to be placed in the centre of them. An academy, as I have before observed, commonly means a corporation, with a township of land in Maine, given them by the State, and a pretty convenient house, built generally by the patriotic subscriptions of those who expect to use it; the instructor being supported, chiefly or altogether, by a separate tax on the scholars. In each of these ten towns, select the six individuals, who have families to educate, who set the highest value on education, and who are able to defray the expenses of the best which can be had, either in a private school among themselves, or at the academy, which, by the supposition, is in their neighbourhood. Now of what immediate consequence can it be to the six families of each town, or to the sixty families of the ten towns, whether there be such a thing as a free school in the commonwealth or not! They have a general interest in them, to be sure, because they have themselves been there instructed, and the early associations of childhood and youth are strong; and they have a sort of speculative belief, if it be not rather an innate sentiment, that free schools make a free people. But how are their own particular, personal, and immediate interests affected? Without any libel upon human nature, these are the main springs to human actions. These are the motives, which find their way soonest to the human heart, and influence most powerfully and steadily the opinions of men, and the conduct founded upon and resulting from them.

“ As soon as difficulties and disagreements, in regard to the free schools, arise, as they necessarily must, upon various topics; such as the amount of money to be raised, the distribution of it among the several districts, the manner of appropriation, whether it be to the ‘summer schools’ or to the ‘winter schools,’ to pay an instructor from this family or from that family, of higher qualifications, of this or that political or religious creed, or a thousand other questions which are constantly occurring; if any of our six families happen to be dissatisfied or disgusted with any course which may be adopted, they will, immediately, abandon the free schools, and provide for the education of their children in their own way. They may organize a private school, for their own convenience, upon such principles as they most approve. Or, they may send their scholars, at an expense trifling to them, to the academy in their neighbourhood. Well, what if they do? The free schools remain, all taxes are paid, cheerfully, for their support,

and the number of scholars is lessened. What is the evil of their sending their children somewhere else to be educated? We should, at first, suppose, that it would be an advantage; inasmuch as the amount of money to be expended would be left the same, and the number of pupils to receive the benefit of it would be considerably diminished.

“But the evils of this course, and of the general policy of the State government, which has led to it, are very serious ones. When the six individuals of any country town, who are, by the supposition, first in point of wealth and interest in the subject, and who will generally be also first in point of intelligence and influence in town affairs, withdraw their children from the common schools; there is, at the same time, withdrawn a portion of intelligence from their direction and heartfelt interest from their support. This intelligence is needed, to manage the delicate and important concerns of the schools. And this heartfelt interest is needed, to lead the way to improvements, to stimulate and encourage larger and larger appropriations, and to insure vigilance in their expenditure. Patriotism and philanthropy are dull motives to exertions for the improvement of common schools, compared with parental affection. And this quickening power has gone off to the academies or somewhere else, with the children, who are the objects of it.

“Look at the operation of this influence of the academies upon the free schools, on a still smaller scale. Examine the condition of the latter in the very towns, where academies are placed; and where, if their influence be a happy one, we should expect to find the common schools in the best condition. What is the fact? From observation and from information collected from authentic sources, the assertion may be hazarded, that the condition of the free schools will be found, on examination, to be worse, far worse, in those towns, than in any others. And it is for this plain reason; because those, who can barely afford the expense of tuition, will send their children to the academy, which the State or benevolent individuals have built up for their accommodation, and give themselves no farther trouble about the free schools, but to pay the tax-bill for their support when it is presented.” pp. 30—32.

With the slender means appropriated to their support, and the little interest taken in them, it is no wonder that errors of instruction, the most perverse and injurious, should every where prevail in our common schools. It is impossible to describe the bad effects, which may thus be produced. Base prejudices are fastened upon the mind, which it can never entirely remove. Children acquire a thorough distaste for education, and thus shut themselves out for ever from those enjoyments, which are the most elevating, as well as productive of the highest good. The pleasure

of learning is naturally great even to the infant mind. The existence of strong early curiosity proves this incontestably. A disposition to examine, to find out, to know, is among the first which the expanding intellect puts forth. There must be a degree of pleasure, too, in the judicious exercise of every one of the faculties, which Heaven has bestowed upon us, that of the most useful, probably, being the most interesting and delightful. To what admirable account might not this be turned, in all our schools for education! To what feeble, and indeed ruinous account, is it not actually turned in the schools of which we are speaking! Let any body go into one of these, and mark the uninteresting discipline of the master, the listless languor and weary indifference which every where reigns, the unmeaning gaze with which the pupils pore over and recite their lessons, and the joy, or rather the bounding exultation, with which they greet even a momentary respite from what they think their slavish toils. What is the reason of all this? They are called on to study what is far beyond the reach of their intellects, and what their instructor, if he be able himself to comprehend, which, even to them, often seems doubtful, has neither the means nor the ability to teach them, and, if he did, would, nine times out of ten, be useless to them. We cannot stop now to point out, particularly, these profitless, unintelligible studies; nor is it necessary that we should. In the "Letters" before referred to, Mr. Carter has exposed the principal ones, and, in our review* of these "Letters," we were at pains to dwell at considerable length upon what we still think the greatest and most abusive of them; to these we must refer those of our readers, who have any doubts on this subject. There is no chance for their removal, or for improvement in them under the present state of things. The instructors are incapable of it. The committees, who have the ordering and management of the doings of the schools, are in general also incapable of it, and commonly follow the instructor's advice. Old errors will thus hold their ground. The slight public scrutiny, to which they are exposed, will never make them, nor the evils of them, sufficiently known. New ones, though of precisely the same character, will be likely to creep in, and thus our schemes for the universal diffusion of intelligence, instead of improving, like every thing else, as society advances in opulence, are in fact on the decline, or at best but stationary.

If the standing of the free schools were raised to its proper elevation, as we shall presently see may be done with the utmost

* "United States Literary Gazette," Vol. I. page 135.

ease, and by the simplest act of legislation, every one of these evils will be lessened. The higher classes of people will again lend a strong hand to their support. A somewhat greater amount of money, it is true, must be appropriated to them, than now is. But the whole expense of common education in the commonwealth, will be far less, because large numbers of the pupils, who are now driven to the academies or private schools, will be withdrawn from them, and their bills therefore saved. There are many who will thus receive some direct aid in the education of their children, from the taxes which they are obliged to pay, and which now benefit them only remotely and contingently. This education, too, may, for a variety of reasons, be far superior to what it has been. The parents will have it under their immediate care and supervision. The conduct of the free schools will be watched by men of the highest intelligence; their influence over the pupil's mind easily ascertained; and the vices in their management, or modes of instruction, speedily corrected. At least we may have incomparably more to expect from their improvement, than we can possibly hope for now. There will be some prospect of better things.

And how, then, are these schools to be most effectually rescued from their degradation, and raised to the rank they deserve? We have said, that the remedy was perfectly plain and easy. No intricate scheme, nor refined, tedious, elaborate process of legislation is necessary for the purpose. Simply raise the qualifications of the teachers. The character of the schools will follow those, whatever they may be, and rise as they rise, or fall as they fall, and in exactly the same proportion. These are Mr. Carter's remarks on this subject.

“The character of the schools, and, of course, their political, moral, and religious influence upon the community, depend, almost solely, upon the character of the teachers. Their influence is strong or weak, just in proportion as the instructors are skilful or ignorant, energetic or feeble; it is in this direction or that direction, just as they are imbued with one or another principle. So that whatever is done to elevate the character of teachers, elevates, at the same time, and in the same degree, the character of the schools which they teach, and enlarges and strengthens their influence upon the community. And whatever is done or suffered to lower the character of the teachers, must sink, at the same time and in the same degree, the character of the schools, and destroy or pervert their influence upon society. Many other considerations must be taken into account in organizing a perfect and an energetic system of public instruction. These are some of them; a generous

appropriation of money to the purpose, a proper classification of scholars, an efficient and independent tribunal to ensure competency in teachers, and to overlook, examine, and report to the public, whether their duties have been faithfully performed, and, lastly, good books. But all of these objects, though highly important, are subsequent in their nature to the preparation of teachers. And no one of them can be attempted, with a reasonable expectation of accomplishing it to the greatest advantage, till good teachers are provided and ready for the work." pp. 43, 44.

On this point we have something more than mere theory or reasoning, however powerful these might be. Actual experiments are before us, of the perfect truth of Mr. Carter's remarks. We allude to the situation of some of the free schools in several of the large towns. The free classical school in Boston, particularly, which is under the care of a teacher of deserved reputation, holds, perhaps, the highest rank in our country, and gentlemen of wealth, intelligence, and personal power, are ambitious of procuring admittance to it for their children, although they must there associate intimately with the poor and humble, because it is thrown open gratuitously to the youth of merit in every class of society, however low and destitute may be their condition in life. Such establishments do infinite honor to the republican feelings of the city and of the state to which they belong. And something of this character, though certainly not so high, may and ought to be given to every one of the free schools in our country. It is remarkable, that, in acts of political generosity like this, the contrast should be such, and so strongly marked as it is, between the villages, where the utmost equality is supposed to prevail, and the large wealthy towns, where the distinction of ranks is suspected and railed at. The very reverse would be commonly anticipated. It shows how false, unjust, and ungenerous, are all those suspicions and intimations. Innumerable facts, as well as the equalizing, elevating nature of our political institutions, ought to destroy them. They cannot, indeed, long continue.

But how are the instructors to be most surely and efficiently qualified for their important business? The plan of Mr. Carter, which we believe to be so far original with him, as to justify the closest association of his name with it, seems to us equally simple and satisfactory. It is to found an institution to be devoted exclusively to this peculiar purpose.

Let some individual, or individuals, first start and get such an institution under way. Then let the State take it under its immediate patronage and support. Let private and public interests

be thus mingled and made to co-operate, in order that by the former it may be regularly, efficiently, and profitably governed, and that, by the latter, it may be aided in its earliest efforts, and afterwards supervised so as to exclude party politics, local prejudices, narrow, bigoted, sectarian views on any subject, from ever having an influence in its administration. We consider this union of interests, though not particularly mentioned, nor we believe alluded to, by Mr. Carter, who seems to have merely a private institution in view, to be of vital importance to its establishment and utility. If it were left to be got up by the State alone, it must be delayed, and would probably fall through, as many excellent plans have done, from the variety of the projects proposed, and, even if it were thus established, would be almost sure to be irregularly, inefficiently, and unprofitably managed, and might, at some future day, become the abode of favoritism, of mere sinecures and placemen. If, on the contrary, it were only a private establishment, the evils, which we have alluded to, might still gradually creep in.

An institution founded and governed by an individual will be sure of harmony among all its superintending teachers. If there be one of these who does not agree with the others, in any of its measures, and who cannot convince them that he is right, nor be convinced himself that he is wrong, he will be discharged. This could not be so, were it founded, and governed, and its officers appointed solely by the State. Many of them might have very discordant views, and there would be no little difficulty in making them all act in perfect unison. It is needless, however, to state the embarrassments and the evils, as well as the delays, which must result from this mode of establishing the institution.

But a mere private institution, unassisted by the government, will not be suited to the great purpose for which we particularly want it. It will never prepare nor educate, to any considerable extent, the teachers of the free schools, although it may teachers for other situations. The former cannot afford to pay for being thus judiciously instructed. The state must lend them its aid. They are unable to do without it. With the slender funds allowed to them, they can give very little for unrequired, unsolicited qualifications, however valuable these may be, and how much soever they may desire them, as many no doubt do. It would be a most unproductive investment of their money so to employ it. Cheap instructors are every where sought for. Those, who, from their want of intelligence or acquirements, cannot find profitable employment elsewhere, are necessarily procured. Ought such

to be allowed to assume the high responsibility of forming the intellectual character certainly, if not the moral and religious character, of the great mass of the population? We are condemned to it, unless the government, in some way, steps in to our relief. Let it, then, lend its aid to some enterprising individual, who will start such an institution as we have described, and claim as a compensation therefor, the right, in some measure, of supervision and control. This right should be co-extensive with the means furnished. If there be enough to procure some general instruction for all our common-school teachers, the public ought to have the power of overseeing the investment of it, and of knowing well that it is prudently, and economically, and impartially appropriated. It is by no means to be a mere gift, gratuitously bestowed upon the institution. A full compensation is to be previously made, and before any portion of the fund be paid, the legislature, by their committee, should ascertain that the services, which are to form this compensation, have been rendered fairly and properly.

The plan of the institution, as we have already intimated, and its site, ought to be left entirely to the individual who shall undertake it. If the legislature interfere, or have any thing to do with either of these, there may be conflicting interests, as well as conflicting schemes, to reconcile. Almost every member of influence, who is friendly to it, and we hope all are so, will have some views of his own to propose, or some new modification of those proposed by others, so that, from the very multitude of its warm supporters, there must be much delay, if not a total failure at last, and the measures, which ultimately succeed in such cases, are not always sure of being the best. Let an individual, who has long devoted his attention exclusively to the subject, and who must have the strongest partiality for the place, which will be the most productive to the institution, and thus the most profitable to himself, do all the planning alone. Mr. Carter has in fact done it, we believe. In these Essays he has slightly sketched the outline of a project, which he promises soon to lay before the public more at large. We hope he will do it immediately. There cannot be too much promptitude in the execution of a scheme like this. The principal features of it, thus briefly drafted, we intended to give to our readers entire, and in the language of Mr. Carter. But we have now room to state only two of the most important of them; these are, the library and the school for children and youth; the latter is to be connected with the institution, and to form a sort of

experimental, or rather, we should say, practical department in the system of its instruction.

“A library should, of course, be selected with particular reference to the objects of the institution. It would naturally and necessarily, contain the approved authors on the science of education in its widest sense. It would embrace works of acknowledged merit in the various branches of literature and science intimately connected with education; such as anatomy and physiology, the philosophy of the human mind and heart, and the philosophy of language.

“Physical education forms a very essential part of the subject, and should be thoroughly understood. This branch includes the developement of all the organs of the body. And works upon the physiology of children should be added to the library. Books on gymnastics, containing directions for particular exercises adapted to the developement of the several organs, belong to the library of the accomplished instructor as well as to that of the surgeon. Indeed, if the former properly use them, they will enable him to give a firmness to the parts of the body, which may, perhaps, supersede the necessity of the interference of the latter to set them right in manhood.

“The philosophy of the infant mind must be understood by the instructor, before much progress can be made in the science of education; for a principal branch of the science consists in forming the mind. And the skill of the teacher in this department is chiefly to be seen in his judicious adaptation of means to the developement of the intellectual faculties. Every book, therefore, which would aid in an analysis of the youthful mind, should be placed in the library of the proposed institution.

“The human heart, the philosophy of its passions and its affections must be studied by those who expect to influence those passions and form those affections. This branch of the subject includes the government of children, especially in the earliest stages of their discipline. The success of the teacher here depends upon the good judgment with which he arranges and presents to his pupils the motives that will soonest move them, and most permanently influence their actions. The mistaken or wicked principles of parents and instructors, in this department of education, have, no doubt, perverted the dispositions of many hopeful children. If successful experience has been recorded, it should be brought to the assistance of those, who must otherwise act without experience.

“Lastly, the study of the philosophy of language would be essential to the scientific teacher. The term, *language*, is not here understood to mean a class of words called Greek, or another class of words called Latin, or even that class of words which we

call English. It means something more general, and something which can hardly be defined. It embraces all the means we use to excite in the minds of others the ideas, which we have already in our own minds. These, whatever they are, are included in the general definition of language. This is a great desideratum in our systems of education. We do not possess a language by which we can produce *precisely* the idea in a pupil, which we have in our own mind, and which we wish to excite in his. And impatient and precipitate teachers often quarrel with their pupils, because they do not arrive at the same conclusions with themselves, when, if they could but look into their minds, they would find, that the ideas with which they begin to reason, or which enter into their processes of reasoning, are altogether different. Every book or fact, therefore, which would do any thing to supply this desideratum, or enable the teacher better to understand precisely the idea which he excites in the mind of his pupils, should be collected in the instructor's library."

"A school of children and youth of different ages, and pursuing different branches of study, would form an essential part of the institution, In the early stages of the education of children, the discipline should consist almost wholly of such exercises as serve to develop the different faculties, and strengthen all the powers of the mind. And in the subsequent education of youth, when the discipline comes to consist partly in the developement of the mind, and partly in the communication of knowledge, the course of instruction would be the same, whether the pupil were destined to be a teacher or not. The objects of the institution do not, therefore, become peculiar, till after the pupil has acquired a certain degree of freedom and strength of mind; nor till after he has made the acquisition of the requisite amount of knowlegde for the profession of teacher. Though a pupil would necessarily imbibe a good deal of clearness and method in his intellectual exercises, by submitting the direction of them to a skilful instructor, the study of the science of teaching cannot properly begin till he changes relations with those about him; and, instead of following a course prescribed by another, and exhibiting the powers of his own mind without an effort to take cognizance of them, he assumes to look down upon humbler minds, to direct their movements, and to detect and classify the phenomena of their subtle workings.

"After the young candidate for an instructor, therefore, has acquired sufficient knowledge for directing those exercises and teaching those branches, which he wishes to profess, he must then begin his labors under the scrutinizing eyes of one who will note his mistakes of government and faults of instruction, and correct them. The experienced and skilful professor of the science will observe how the mind of the young teacher acts upon that of the

learner. He will see how far and how perfectly they understand each other, and which is at fault if they do not understand each other at all. If the more inexperienced teacher should attempt to force upon the mind of a child an idea or a process of reasoning, for which it was not in a proper state, he would be checked, at once, and told of his fault; and thus, perhaps, the pupil would be spared a disgust for a particular study, or an aversion to all study. As our earliest experience would in this manner be under the direction of those wiser than ourselves, it would the more easily be classed under general principles for our direction afterwards. This part of the necessary course in an institution for the education of teachers, might be much aided by lectures. Children exhibit such and such intellectual phenomena; the scientific professor of education can explain those phenomena, and tell from what they arise. If they are favorable, he can direct how they are to be encouraged and turned to account in the developement and formation of the mind. If they are unfavorable, he can explain by what means they are to be overcome or corrected. Seeing intellectual results, he can trace them, even through complicated circumstances, to their causes; or, knowing the causes and circumstances, he can predict the result that will follow them. Thus every day's experience would be carefully examined, and made to limit or extend the comprehension of the general principles of the science. Is there any other process or method than this to arrive at a philosophical system of education? If any occurs to other minds, it is to be hoped that the public may soon have the benefit of it." pp. 51—55.

We need say nothing in favor of these two parts of the plan of Mr Carter. They must recommend themselves to the minds of all our thinking readers; it seems to us, that, if judiciously managed, they are sufficient of themselves to secure to the institution a most successful and salutary influence. The only doubt which can arise, will be on the first; for some may suppose, that it is refining too much, and carrying the qualifications of the teachers of our common schools a little too far. But let it be remembered, that education has been confined too long to the school room; that the instructor ought, at least, to acquaint himself with every branch of it, both of the body and of the mind; that he may have an agreeable influence over his pupils, in their hours of relaxation and play, as well as in those which are to be devoted to serious study. It is by reasoning on things as they are, and have been, rather than as they should be, that people are apt to err. The whole system of free-school education ought to be reversed. It cannot be done at once, nor speedily. All great improvements must be slow; and Mr. Carter here looks

forward to the time, when those in popular education which are of much utility, will be gradually seen, and at last thoroughly understood to be such. It is in this way, that the above remarks of his are to be considered.

We have left ourselves little room to speak of the probable advantages of such an institution. They are great, and at present certainly, must be incalculable. Its object, is to teach the art of teaching. In an early number of the "United States Literary Gazette," we claim the merit of having been the first to call public attention to the singular fact, that instructors are the only class of people in the community, who are not in some way regularly educated for their profession. This is the more singular, considering the great number of them, and the invariable regularity of their employment. There is no single calling, which requires nearly so many persons,—probably all the learned professions together do not; and the demand for them is sure, and increases rapidly, and becomes higher as society advances in wealth. Yet, with all its indescribable importance, not a day, nor an hour, is given to direct mental preparation for this business, although the humblest artisan thinks it necessary to devote whole years of apprenticeship to qualify himself for his. What can be the reason of this? It is, we believe, because the true object of education is overlooked or mistaken. The instructor is apt to think it amply sufficient, if he be in the possession of stores of knowledge himself, and have the talent of freely opening them to others. Nothing can be more erroneous than such an idea. Learning is not intelligence. That may belong to a very stupid, unprofitable member of society; while this is sure to give a man weight, influence, and high character, wherever he may be placed, and how little soever may be the extent of his erudition. It is not inert knowledge, which the pupil wants. It is not the forced, struggling, reluctant discipline of thought, which is ever to be imposed upon him by his tutor. But awaken his curiosity; lead him thus to love the voluntary exercise of his intellectual powers; interest and engage him in the pursuit, and he is sure to acquire vigor, energy, and enterprise, which will qualify him better to meet the rubs of life, than all the erudition in the world without them; and will, moreover, give him a power over erudition, which he cannot possibly gain in any other way. In these remarks, we are conscious of stating what is not new, and what we ourselves have already stated long ago. The numerous, uncured popular errors on this subject must form our only apology for the repetition. To correct these, as Mr. Carter says, will be one of the greatest objects of the institution.

Another great advantage of it must be, that it will tend to equalize the education of the free schools all over the commonwealth. At present, it is not only far from being uniform, but is also most variable and irregular. One town has immensely the superiority over another; the same town will have different privileges at different times; and even the different districts of the same town are never on a perfect equality in this respect. Such inequalities in the general diffusion of education are not likely to be relieved, but, on the contrary, are much heightened by the multitude and the variety of our academies and private schools. Every pupil may find one of these suited exactly to his circumstances in life. Sensible parents of humble condition, who can barely afford to give up their children's time, will yet labor to rescue them, if possible, from the degrading influences of the common schools, where they are sure of seeing them in bad company, if not under bad tuition, and contrive to place them at some cheap seminary, where they know they will have better associates, although they are not capable of ascertaining that the plans of education are in any measure superior, which is frequently not the case. There is the greatest diversity, too, at all these establishments, in the course of study, the modes of instruction, the discipline, and even in the elementary books which the pupils are called on to procure. The teachers, not being bound to any rules of management, nor having thought seriously on the subject, are obliged to follow each the natural bent of his own unenlightened genius; and thus some may be unduly severe, others be weakly indulgent, and most of them act without being able to assign any satisfactory reasons even to themselves, for their whole plan of conduct.

This is not all, nor indeed nearly the worst of it. Changes are frequently made, particularly at the common schools, in every thing; changes in the instructors, in the modes of instruction, in the course of study, in the discipline, and sometimes even in the books, which must be at the pupils' expense. The evils of these changes are most apparent. No general plan of education can be invariably pursued for any length of time. Regularity and uniformity are impossible. There is nothing of the nature of system, on which we know the success of all intellectual efforts so materially depends. The first aim and effect of such an institution as we have pointed to, must be to introduce every where in our country, some general plan of common education. This will tend to equalize it universally. It will be sure of producing order, uniformity, regularity, system. Without this last, we know how

unavailing is even the most enterprising industry. Even an ardent passion for learning may thus run to waste. The pupil, whose desire of intellectual labor is not steadily directed, and whose course of study is subject to continual fluctuations, resembles a man of irregular habits, who is often changing his profession or trade; though active, ingenious, and even energetic, he loses much time, is always restless and uneasy, and rarely brings about any great results. The total want of any common system, not only in the internal management of the free schools, but also in the control and supervision of them by the towns, must be obvious to the most careless and superficial observer. There are very few things, excepting the general character of the elementary books, in which they all agree. This general character, we think, to be bad, involving those errors of education, which we have briefly alluded to before. It is singular, that the only measures or plans of study, in which they entirely harmonize, should be the most injurious.

But the greatest diversity, irregularity, and change arise in the internal government of schools, or in the master's mode of keeping order and enforcing obedience to his commands, because this must depend entirely upon his disposition, or his peculiar natural temper, unless he has first coolly prescribed to himself certain rules for administering his laws, from which he will never allow himself on any occasion to depart. It is upon this subject, too, that parents' apprehensions are the most serious, and that they justly feel great anxiety and concern. They are unwilling to send their children to schools where there is weak indulgence or insubordination, for they can learn little in such places, but to be unruly, wilful, and assuming. They ought to be, and always are, still more averse to putting them into the hands of a teacher of a severe and irritable temper, who rules principally by corporal chastisement; the child's spirit may thus be broken, bad feelings given him, and he will surely acquire an early hatred for study, for books, for every thing, in short, which wears the appearance of instruction or of learning. Now it is in adjusting and regulating properly this, that we are to expect the greatest benefit from the proposed institution. We believe it will tend not only to equalize, and render uniform and invariable the modes of discipline every where in the schools, but also to introduce one far superior to that in common use, and, in all respects, more agreeable to parents, to pupils, and to instructors. We know such to be the natural result, in fact, of all the late improvements in the art of teaching. They tend to soften the reign of terror, which so long exclusively prevailed in the school room. They

banish from it cruelty and suffering, both corporal and mental, since these may be as injurious or as ineffectual in their influence on the pupil's mind, as they are painful to parental feelings. They show us, that there are better springs of action, even in the infant's bosom, than fear, and that these may be made to act most powerfully in support of early intellectual effort. If learning, when judiciously guided and governed, be in reality a delightful employment, which, as we have already intimated, we hold to be as clearly demonstrable, as any proposition founded merely on moral reasoning can be, we know not why this should not give a new character to the common discipline of our schools, and indeed to the common principles of education every where. It is this alone which will render obedience easy, or willing, or in any great degree profitable to the student. It is this, too, which will lighten the laborious duty of the instructor; for as his business is now conducted in most places, it must be as irksome to him, if he have common sensibility, as it is wearing and unprofitable to his most reluctant pupil. Our readers will perceive, that this improvement in the internal discipline of the schools, can arise only from an improvement in the usual elementary books, or in the usual modes of teaching by them. We cannot expect it to take place immediately or soon, however highly favored it may be. But it is the result towards which all useful inventions in the art of instruction certainly tend. We believe that the proposed institution will do much to carry it, in some degree, into our common schools, although it may long fall far short of its full and perfect operation.

We have thus attempted to show, that the proposed institution will naturally tend to raise the tone of free education throughout the country,—equalize it every where, render it uniform, regular, free from capricious, unreasonable fluctuations, and gradually introduce the only effectual mode of governing or of exercising power over the scholars, and insuring their obedience, which is, to make instruction pleasing to them. On this subject, we are not willing to be thought enthusiastic; but may we not expect more, and other benefits from it, than those, which we have enumerated? Will it not help to diffuse more generally a knowledge of the science and of the art of education? There is scarcely any one, to whom this knowledge can be superfluous or unimportant. Yet at present they are so little known, even to those most deeply interested in them, that many need be told, that such a science and such an art are in existence. May we not hope from it something more than this? Will it not be likely

to multiply facilities of instruction, and to suggest improvements even in the best systems, which have hitherto been established? Here is an industrious body of young men, in the full vigor of intellect, brought together for the sole purpose of examining this subject. They will be likely to look into all the treatises which have been written upon it; trace out their errors; collect and put together every thing that is valuable in each of them; and discuss questions which are connected with them, and which they suggest, in such a manner as shall lead to a careful investigation of the fundamental principles, by which education is to be successfully directed. They are supposed to have always by them skilful, practical, experienced superintendents to guide and direct them. With these, and with each other, they may be in fair, though earnest competition. The school, too, which is to form a most important department in the institution, will always furnish an opportunity of trying the accuracy of every one of the measures proposed, by actual observation and experiment, which must take place in the presence of the whole institution. The instructors will be sure thus of gaining an interest in their employment, which they could not otherwise have. When actually engaged in educating, a confidence will be reposed in them by parents and by pupils, which they do not now possess, but which is most essential to the success of all their well judged efforts. They will thus acquire the entire control and direction of the schools, and the appointment of the elementary books, independent of the committees whom the towns appoint for this purpose; for, although no law confers these powers upon them, common consent will. They must acquire, too, a high, a well merited, and an important rank in the community. This they once indeed had. They have long since deservedly lost it. It is most essential, however, that the teachers of our free schools should be admissible into the best, the most refined and intelligent classes of society; because they may make there valuable acquisitions for themselves, which will go into their course of instruction, and color materially the manners and behaviour, as well as the whole intellectual education of their pupils. This would be of incalculable advantage to all those concerned in it. It would help, too, to carry into effect, and turn to great practical account, the truly republican nature of the free schools.

But we must dwell upon this theme no longer. The only apology we have to offer for treating it so much at length, is its confessedly great importance, and the little interest, which, until within a very few months, it seems to have excited in our literary

journals, or in the minds of sensible public-spirited men. The necessity of the States' appropriating money to this purpose, or ordering the towns to do it, has in this country, we believe, never been formally denied. The only shadow of argument, which we have ever seen brought against it, arises from a mistake or a misconstruction of those leading, indisputable principles in political economy, that things naturally tend to find their own level; that the supply of the wants of a prosperous or opulent society will be in full proportion to the demand; and that government ought never to interfere in the direction of private interests, or to aid in the profitable appropriation of private property, because individuals will do this much better themselves. It is said, that, on these maxims, the supply of education will regulate itself, and that statesmen should not trouble themselves to guide it, much less to levy a high and most unequal tax for its support. Nothing can be more false and abusive than such an application of those great and admirable principles. If so understood, they must go to the abolition of every tax, however slight, or however important it might be. Smith, the profound author of them, did not think them so to be applied, for he was the master advocate of great national institutions for popular and general instruction, and has devoted a large department in his inestimable work on the Wealth of Nations, in defence of them. Those maxims can be applied with propriety only to the investment of capital for pecuniary profit or emolument. Every body must be convinced that the individual owners can dispose of this most productively to themselves, because they can see their own little interests quicker, and more keenly, than any legislature, however wise or impartial. Not so, however, with education. This stands on a far different footing. The ignorant know not, and are wholly incapable of estimating its value, until it is too late to acquire it. It is here alone, we believe, that a government can rightly and profitably step in to the direction of its subjects, and point out to them their truest interests. We think it bound to aid them in the acquisition of intelligence, and, as far as possible, force them to it. Our own, we have said, must owe to this alone its power of self-preservation. This is no modern opinion. It was held by the most renowned statesmen of antiquity. The latest great historian of Greece tells us, in a passage referred to by Mr. Carter in these Essays, that Lycurgus resolved the whole business of legislation into the education of youth.

The following is a list of the names of the persons who have been admitted to the office of the Secretary of the Board of Education since the last meeting of the Board. The names are arranged in alphabetical order of their surnames.

Mr. J. A. Smith
Mr. W. B. Jones
Mr. C. D. Brown
Mr. E. F. Green
Mr. G. H. White
Mr. I. K. Black
Mr. L. M. Gray
Mr. N. O. Blue
Mr. P. Q. Red
Mr. R. S. Yellow
Mr. T. U. Purple
Mr. V. W. Orange
Mr. X. Y. Green
Mr. Z. A. Blue

The names of the persons who have been admitted to the office of the Secretary of the Board of Education since the last meeting of the Board are as follows:

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